

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2983

As Passed House:
February 8, 2006

Title: An act relating to forwarding of sex offender information.

Brief Description: Clarifying procedures for forwarding sex offender information.

Sponsors: By Representatives O'Brien, Ericks, Upthegrove, Sells, Kilmer, Green, Pearson, Springer, Conway and Simpson; by request of Washington State Patrol.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Criminal Justice & Corrections: 1/31/06 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/8/06, 98-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the county sheriff to forward information about a registered sex offender's risk level to the Washington State Patrol (WSP) for inclusion in the WSP central registry.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives O'Brien, Chair; Darneille, Vice Chair; Pearson, Ranking Minority Member; Ahern, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Kirby, Strow and Williams.

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

In 1990, the Legislature enacted the Community Protection Act, which created one of the first sex offender registration laws in the country. A person convicted of a sex or kidnapping offense must register with the county sheriff of the county in which he or she resides. An offender must provide a variety of information when registering including his or her name, address, date and place of birth, place of employment, crime of conviction, date and place of conviction, aliases, Social Security number, photograph, and fingerprints. The offender must also notify the county sheriff if he or she is enrolled in a public or private school or in an institution of higher education.

Law enforcement agencies are authorized to release information regarding registered sex offenders based on the offenders' risk level. For example, for risk level I offenders (evaluated as the lowest level of risk within the larger community), a law enforcement agency may only disclose information about the offenders to specified persons and entities; e.g., schools, victims, witnesses. In contrast, for risk level III offenders (evaluated as the most risky to the community), a law enforcement agency may disclose information about the offenders to the public at large.

The WSP maintains a central registry of sex and kidnapping offenders. The county sheriff is required to forward the information, photographs, and fingerprints obtained from the offender upon registration. Currently, the county sheriff is not required to forward information about the offender's risk level classification to the WSP.

Summary of Bill:

The county sheriff is required to forward information about a registered sex offender's risk level to the WSP for inclusion in the WSP central registry.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Preliminary fiscal note available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: County sheriffs have been voluntarily providing the WSP with risk level information on registered sex offenders. However, around 10 percent of the offenders in the registry are unclassified. The WSP is prepared to accept this information in any manner the county sheriffs choose to provide it.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Captain Jeff DeVere, Washington State Patrol.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.